

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

REPORT OF THE STATE FORESTER.

To the General Court.

The first annual report of the State Forester covers a period of less than six months. The act which established the office did not go into effect until the first of last July. At the time of my appointment I was State Forester for Connecticut, and I could not get relieved from the duties of that position until the 12th of August, when I qualified for the position in Massachusetts; so the report which follows covers only the time between the 12th of August and the 31st of December, 1904.

COURSE IN FORESTRY AT THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

The act which establishes this office makes it the duty of the State Forester to give such a course of instruction to the students of the Massachusetts Agricultural College on the art and science of forestry as may be arranged for by the trustees of the college and the forester. I have arranged with the president of the college, Dr. Henry H. Goodell, pending the sanction of the Board of Trustees, for a course of twelve lectures and two field exercises. Several of these lectures will deal with forestry in general; the others will be devoted to the forest problems of Massachusetts, particularly those which arise in connection with farm wood lots, these being the most appropriate for the consideration of agricultural students.

This year (1905) the course will be given in February and March; but hereafter it will probably be given in January, in order that special students taking the short winter course at the college may have an opportunity of getting some instruction in forestry. The college has a small wood lot, for which a plan of management will be prepared, with the assistance of the students. While this wood lot is not a typical one, still, it presents some of the problems that the students are likely to meet with in the management of their own properties.

PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE TO OWNERS OF WOODLANDS.

Section 2 of the act provides that the State Forester may, upon suitable request, give to any person owning or controlling forest lands aid or advice in the management thereof, the owner being liable to the forester for the necessary expenses for travelling and subsistence incurred by himself or his assistants. Up to the date of this report fourteen applications for practical assistance have been received. These applications represent an area of approximately two thousand acres. Five of these tracts have been visited, and advice has been given in regard to their management. This included the marking of trees for removal, in improvement thinnings, in order to start the owner on the right track. The winter closed in before more work along this line could be accomplished.

While the act gives the forester no authority on State lands, it does make his services available to the State as well as to private owners. Inquiries have been received relative to this matter from the commission in charge of the Mount Tom Reservation, and I hope that other reservations will follow suit; for practical work of this kind on State lands should be the special duty of the State Forester.

In order to make the offer of the State in this matter better known, a circular letter has been printed, setting forth the conditions under which the work may be done, and it is being distributed among those likely to be interested. A copy of this circular is here given. It is hoped that in response to this circular the advice of the forester will be sought more frequently.

In this connection a plan of co-operation between this office and the United States Bureau of Forestry has been arranged. Applications for practical assistance made to the United States Bureau of Forestry by owners of woodlands in Massachusetts will be referred to the State Forester, or such portions of them as he may be able to take care of. The United States Bureau of Forestry will assist him in the tabulation of data taken in the course of forest work, and he will furnish the Bureau with duplicate copies of such data as may be of value to it. This will mean a considerable saving to the State in the matter of clerk hire. This plan of co-operation was submitted to the Governor by Mr. Gifford Pinchot, chief of the United States Bureau of Forestry, and it received the hearty approval of His Excellency. This plan of co-operation will be of great benefit to both the State and the United States.

[COPY OF CIRCULAR NO. 1.]

PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE TO OWNERS OF WOODLANDS, INCLUDING PROSPECTIVE PLANTATIONS.

It is the desire of the State Forester to make the work of his office of as much practical value as possible to the owners of woodlands within the Commonwealth. To this end, as much of his time as other duties will permit is reserved for the owners of woodlands.

Application for practical assistance should be accompanied by a short description of the tract, stating its size, kind of growth, and the distance from city, town or village. Such applications are grouped according to the parts of the Commonwealth from which they come. In this way several wood lots may be examined on the same trip, and the travelling and subsistence expenses of the forester pro-rated among the several owners, making the expenses very light for the individual owner.

As the forester is often in Amherst on official duties, applicants for advice on the management of lands situated in the counties of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden, are charged travelling expenses from Amherst instead of from Boston, which arrangement makes the services of the forester as available to land owners in the western part of the Commonwealth as to those of the eastern.

In most cases an examination can be quickly made, and

advice given verbally; but if upon examination a written scheme of management is found to be advisable, the forester may, with the consent of the owner, prepare such scheme of management or working plan, and he will consult with the owner as often as may be found necessary in carrying out the plan. The expenses connected with the preparation and carrying out of such a plan are to be borne by the owner, as set forth in the agreement between the State Forester and the owner, a copy of which will, upon application, be furnished to any person owning or controlling woodlands in the Commonwealth.

Unforested lands which the owner desires to plant fall within the meaning of the term woodlands, as used above.

A FOREST MAP.

The State Bureau of Statistics of Labor has been in consultation with the forester relative to the collection of forest statistics for the census of 1905, and I am assured that this census will contain more information about the forests of the Commonwealth than any previous census. A map showing the forest area of the State is to be prepared in this connection. Those in charge of this work have shown a commendable spirit in regard to the matter, and I look for some tangible results from this disposition on the part of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor to help along the work of this office.

THE STATE FOREST NURSERY.

It is specified in the act establishing the office that the State Forester may establish and maintain a nursery for the propagation of forest tree seedlings on such lands as the trustees of the Massachusetts Agricultural College may set aside for that purpose on the college grounds at Amherst. The stock raised in this nursery is to be furnished to the State reservations free of charge, and to private owners upon such terms as the forester may fix, subject to the approval of the Governor and Council. I have met a committee of the trustees and have talked the matter over with them, and this committee has recommended to the trustees that a tract of three acres be set aside for the nursery.

My policy in regard to the nursery is to make it a part of the course of instruction at college. It would be a mis-

take for the State to go into the wholesale raising of seedlings for public distribution, if the nurserymen of this State can be induced to raise forest tree seedlings and sell them at reasonable rates. Heretofore the nurserymen of this State, and in fact most of the nurserymen of the entire country, have been engaged in raising ornamental and shade trees at prices which prohibit their use in forest plantations, and it is likely that the nurserymen of this State will not care to take up a different line of work; in this event, the nursery will be expanded as circumstances may make it advisable. In regard to the collection and distribution of seeds, for which provision is also made in the act, it has been decided to pursue the same policy as in regard to the nursery. Some seed has been collected for use in connection with the nursery, but, as said above relative to the nursery, it would be a mistake for the State to go into the business of collecting and distributing seeds, if reliable men can be induced to undertake it and furnish seeds at reasonable rates.

THE STATE FOREST LIBRARY.

A library of 141 books and pamphlets has been collected, and they are being arranged and catalogued. Nearly all of these are government publications, and have been presented to this office, so that their collection represents almost no expenditure. It will be my policy to add to this collection from time to time, and to make it available not only for office use, but to all who may wish to use it.

EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN FORESTRY.

Section 2 of the act makes it the general duty of the State Forester to promote the perpetuation, extension and proper management of the forest lands of the Commonwealth, both public and private. Under the provisions here implied, twenty invitations, exclusive of the course at the Agricultural College, to talk or lecture on forestry and kindred subjects, have been accepted. It has been necessary to refuse a great many engagements of this sort, for lack of time, although the value of this kind of educational work is fully realized. Eight of these engagements have already been filled, and the others are for this winter and spring.

THE GYPSY AND BROWN-TAIL MOTHS.

The presence in the Commonwealth of the gypsy and brown-tail moths in large and increasing numbers is a serious forest problem. For this reason I have identified myself with the fight against them that has been carried on in the infested districts this fall. I have spoken before a number of public meetings in regard to their suppression; and I am serving the Massachusetts Association for the Suppression of the Gypsy and Brown-tail Moths in the capacity of secretary-treasurer.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

According to section 5 of the act, the State Forester may include such recommendations in his report as he may deem proper. In view of the rapid increase in number and the consequent increase in destructiveness of the gypsy and brown-tail moths, I recommend to the General Court that, in the interest of the preservation of our forests, it take immediate action toward the suppression of the gypsy and brown-tail moths.

It was my intention to have ready some recommendations in regard to legislation looking toward a better protection of our woodlands from fire, and a reasonable relief from excessive taxation; but both these matters need very careful investigation, in order to get the information necessary to frame effective legislation, as the history of legislation in other States along similar lines abundantly proves. At another time some recommendations along these lines will be made. In the mean time, the various phases of the fire and tax problems are being investigated.

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES.

Section 6 of the act appropriates a sum not exceeding \$5,000, to be expended annually by the State Forester, with the approval of the Governor and Council, in carrying out the provisions of the act; and requiring that a statement of the receipts and expenditures incident to the administration of his office be made in his annual report. Such a statement follows.

Receipts (August to December, 1904).

Cash to the amount of \$8.63 has been returned to this office for travelling and subsistence expenses of the forester, while engaged in practical work for owners of woodlands; and this amount, together with an itemized statement, has been turned over to the Treasurer of the Commonwealth.

Expenditures.

Salaries of assistants,	\$260 11
Travelling expenses of forester,	66 43
Forest nursery,	67 10
Instruments and drawing material,	88 85
Stationery and typewriter,	151 28
Postage,	31 50
Library,	13 05
Printing,	7 50
Miscellaneous,	6 54
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Total,	\$692 36

Respectfully submitted,

ALFRED AKERMAN,
State Forester.

